RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The Government has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with M/s. Gujarat Pipavav Port Limited for forming an SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle) for Gauge Conversion of Surendranagar—Pipavav and a New Line extension to Pipavav Port. The SPV shall undertake the proposed project of implementing the Broad Gauge rail connectivity between Surendranagar and the Port of Pipavav. Tentative project cost is Rs. 270 Crores. (Rs. Two hundred & seventy Crores). Any cost over-run, over and above the project cost of Rs. 270 Crores, shall be on account of the SPV.

The project shall be funded in the following pattern:

66 *2/3%* of the Project Cost shall be funded throug h Equity.

33 1/3% of the Project Cost shall be funded through Debt.

Equity holding pattern:

(i) Ministry of Railways & its PSUs	:	50%
(ii) Gujarat Pipavav Port Limited & others	:	50%

The amount already spent by the Indian Railways on the proposed Broad Gauge Rail connectivity will be reckoned towards the equity contribution of Ministry of Railways.

Introduction of DMU train services in Gujarat

1022. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two new DMU train services on Anand-Khambat and Mahesana-Taranga Hill in Gujarat would be introduced in this financial year, as announced by the Railway Minister during presentation of last Railway Budget; and

(b) if so, when the train services would be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Three pairs of DMU trains between Mahesana and Taranga Hill (MG) have been introduced w.e.f. 8.7.1999.

DMU trains between Anand and Khambat (BG) will be introduced shortly.

Opening of New Jogighopa-Guwahati Rail Line

1023. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when the newly built rail line from Jogighopa to Guwahati would be opened; and

(b) what difficulties are being faced by Government in sanctioning the new loop line from New Moynaguri via Gauripur to Jogighopa, after the initial expenditure of Rs. 1 crore for preliminary survey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJ AY SINGH): (a) The work on the line would be completed by 31.3.2000.

(b) The work has been included in the Railway Budget 2000-2001.

Concessions in Passenger Fares

1024. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that concessions in passenger fares doled out by successive Railways Ministers over the years cost the Railways Rs. 120 crore every month on an average and Rs. 1,440 crore per year, and that the loss amounts to around 15 per cent of the total passenger earnings of Railways; and

(b) if so, what steps are being proposed to balance the above loss to the Railways?

THE MINISTER QF. STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

(b) Concessions are granted as a part of Railways' social obligation towards certain categories of persons like senior citizens, disabled persons, students, etc. There are no plans at present to balance the loss of revenue on this account.